

1 CLAIMS

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3 What is claimed is:

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5 *Sub* 1. A method comprising:
6 *Cont* automatically selecting a candidate program to record;
7 recording content associated with the selected candidate program; and
8 selectively identifying the recorded content within a time-dependent buffer
9 arrangement.

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11 2. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein automatically selecting
12 the candidate program further includes:
13 scanning an electronic program guide (EPG) based on definable user
14 selection criteria to identify the candidate program; and
15 identifying the selected candidate program within the time-dependent
16 buffer arrangement.

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18 3. The method as recited in Claim 2, further comprising:
19 maintaining definable user selection criteria for each one of a plurality of
20 users.

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22 4. The method as recited in Claim 2, further comprising:
23 monitoring user activities associated with the recorded content; and
24 modifying the definable user selection criteria based on the monitored user
25 activities.

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2 5. The method as recited in Claim 2, further comprising:
3 recording a plurality of the recorded content within the time-dependent
4 buffer arrangement, wherein the plurality of the recorded content is in an initial
5 time-ordered sequence; and
6 selectively rearranging the initial time-ordered sequence of the plurality of
7 the recorded content to produce a modified time-ordered sequence within the time-
8 dependent buffer arrangement.

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10 6. The method as recited in Claim 5, wherein the initial time-ordered
11 sequence is automatically rearranged based on a comparison of the content with at
12 least a portion of the definable user selection criteria.

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14 7. The method as recited in Claim 5, wherein the initial time-ordered
15 sequence is manually rearranged based on user inputs.

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17 8. The method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising:
18 selectively identifying the recorded content within the time-dependent
19 buffer arrangement with a permanent storage buffer arrangement.

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21 9. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable
22 instructions for performing steps comprising:
23 automatically selecting a candidate program to record;
24 recording content associated with the selected candidate program; and
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1 selectively identifying the recorded content within a time-dependent buffer
2 arrangement.

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4 10. The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 9, wherein
5 automatically selecting the candidate program further includes:

6 scanning an electronic program guide (EPG) based on definable user
7 selection criteria to identify the candidate program; and
8 identifying the selected candidate program within the time-dependent
9 buffer arrangement.

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11 11. The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 10, further
12 comprising computer-executable instructions for:

13 maintaining definable user selection criteria for each one of a plurality of
14 users.

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16 12. The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 10, further
17 comprising computer-executable instructions for:

18 monitoring user activities associated with the recorded content; and
19 modifying the definable user selection criteria based on the monitored user
20 activities.

1 13. The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 10, further
2 comprising computer-executable instructions for:

3 recording a plurality of the recorded content within the time-dependent
4 buffer arrangement, wherein the plurality of the recorded content is in an initial
5 time-ordered sequence; and

6 selectively rearranging the initial time-ordered sequence of the plurality of
7 the recorded content to produce a modified time-ordered sequence within the time-
8 dependent buffer arrangement.

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10 14. The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 13, wherein the
11 initial time-ordered sequence is automatically rearranged based on a comparison
12 of the content with at least a portion of the definable user selection criteria.

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14 15. The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 13, wherein the
15 initial time-ordered sequence is manually rearranged based on user inputs.

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17 16. The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 9, further
18 comprising computer-executable instructions for:

19 selectively identifying the recorded content within the time-dependent
20 buffer arrangement with a permanent storage buffer arrangement.

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22 17. An arrangement comprising:
23 an intelligent content agent configured to automatically select a candidate
24 program to record;

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1 a time-dependent content buffer mechanism operatively coupled to the
2 intelligent content agent and configurable to receive and record a signal carrying
3 content associated with the selected candidate program.

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5 18. The arrangement as recited in Claim 17, wherein the intelligent
6 content agent is further configured to scan an electronic program guide (EPG)
7 based on definable user selection criteria to identify the candidate program, and
8 identify the selected candidate program within the time-dependent buffer
9 arrangement.

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11 19. The arrangement as recited in Claim 18, wherein the intelligent
12 content agent is further configured to maintain definable user selection criteria for
13 each one of a plurality of users.

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15 20. The arrangement as recited in Claim 18, further comprising a
16 bubbling agent operatively associated with the intelligent content agent and the
17 time-dependent content buffer mechanism, and configured to monitor user
18 activities associated with the recorded content, and modify the definable user
19 selection criteria based on the monitored user activities.

1 21. The arrangement as recited in Claim 18, wherein the time-dependent
2 content buffer mechanism is further configured to:

3 record, in an initial time-ordered sequence, a plurality of signals carrying
4 content associated with a plurality of selected candidate programs; and
5 respond to user input by selectively rearranging the initial time-ordered
6 sequence to produce a modified time-ordered sequence.

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8 22. The arrangement as recited in Claim 18, wherein the time-dependent
9 content buffer mechanism is further configured to:

10 record, in an initial time-ordered sequence, a plurality of signals carrying
11 content associated with a plurality of selected candidate programs; and

12 wherein, the intelligent content agent is further configured to automatically
13 rearrange the initial time-ordered sequence based on a comparison of the content
14 with at least a portion of the definable user selection criteria.

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16 23. The arrangement as recited in Claim 17, further comprising a
17 permanent storage buffer arrangement operatively associated with the time-
18 dependent content buffer mechanism, and wherein the time-dependent content
19 buffer mechanism is further configured to selectively move the recorded content
20 within the time-dependent buffer arrangement to the permanent storage buffer
21 arrangement.

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23 24. The arrangement as recited in Claim 17 wherein the intelligent
24 content agent is further configured to examine closed caption data during
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1 recording of the candidate program to determine if the candidate program
2 significantly matches a specific user criteria.

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5 25. The arrangement as recited in Claim 17 wherein the time-dependent
6 content buffer mechanism is further configured to automatically provide a
7 selectively arranged sequence of recorded candidate programs.
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